

Recommended Guidance for Food Services

Background

SARS-CoV-2 is a novel coronavirus that has emerged and caused coronavirus disease (abbreviated as COVID-19). Public health experts continue to learn about SARS-CoV-2, but based on current data and similar coronaviruses, spread from person-to-person happens most frequently among close contacts (those within about six feet) via respiratory droplets. Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented yet, but current evidence suggests that SARS-CoV-2 may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of material.

The CDC, FDA, and public health districts are not aware of any reports at this time that suggest SARS-CoV-2 can be transmitted by food or food packaging.

Purpose

On April 23, 2020, Governor Brad Little issued the *Idaho Rebounds* plan to reopen Idaho after COVID-19-related impacts and closures. It is a four-phased program to slowly reopen businesses and services that had been closed by state orders. Phase Two which addresses the reopening of restaurant dining rooms became effective on May 16, 2020. The following guidance provides recommendations for food service establishments that wish to resume their operations after closure or those that already reopened their dining areas for service to customers. You are encouraged to use this guidance to build a plan that will help provide a safer environment for patrons and staff amidst COVID-19.

Recommended Actions

Preventing the spread of the virus

- Establish a written, facility-specific COVID-19 safety plan (at every location if multiple locations) and perform a comprehensive risk assessment of all areas of the establishment:
 - Incorporate recommendations of your local public health district and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) into your safety plan.
 - Train and communicate with employees on the plan and make the plan available to employees.
 - Designate a person or a team at each location to implement the plan.
 - Regularly evaluate the establishment for compliance with your COVID-19 safety plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.
 - Implement the necessary processes and protocols when your establishment has a positive COVID-19 case or an outbreak, in accordance with [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html) guidelines.
- Educate employees about when they should stay home and quarantine, and when they can return to work:

- Actively encourage employees who are sick or have recently had a close contact with a person with COVID-19 to stay home.
- Develop policies that encourage sick employees to stay home without fear of reprisal, and ensure employees are aware of these policies.
- **Employees should stay at home if:**
 - An employee has symptoms of COVID-19 as described by the CDC, such as a fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
 - An employee was diagnosed with COVID-19 and has not yet been released from isolation.
 - Within the past 14 days, an employee has had contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and is considered potentially infectious (i.e. still in isolation). The CDC recommendation is to quarantine after having close contact by staying home for 14-days after your last close contact with a person who has COVID-19 and to monitor for symptoms. *Close contact* is an individual who has had contact with someone with COVID-19 within 6-feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or longer.
- Employee can return to work only if 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, their symptoms have improved, and the employee has had no fever (without use of fever reducing medications) for the last 24 hours.
- An employee without symptoms who was diagnosed with COVID-19 can return to work only if 10 days have passed since the date of the first positive COVID-19 test.
- Consider providing temperature and/or symptom screening for all employees at the beginning of their shift and any vendors, contractors, or volunteers entering the establishment. Make sure the temperature/symptom screener avoids close contact with employees to the extent possible.
 - If your employees self-screen at home, ensure that screening was performed prior to employee leaving home for their shift and follows CDC guidelines
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/coronavirus-self-checker.html>
- Managers need to be extra diligent in communicating with staff and monitoring staff closely to ensure that employees:
 - Wash hands frequently and whenever required by the Idaho Food Code - Ensure that the handwashing policy is posted in a place every employee can easily review it as needed. Always keep all hand washing sinks stocked with soap, paper towels, and an adequate supply of warm water.
 - Wear gloves when handling ready to eat foods.
 - Avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth - Stay home if showing or reporting any signs or symptoms of illness.
 - Wear clean clothing, not the same uniform from the day before. If their uniform or clothing is heavily soiled or is in contact with raw meat, a replacement uniform should be provided.
- Employees that are processing payment transactions and also handing bags/containers of food

to customers should wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer between customers. If glove use is chosen as a preventive measure, an employee must wash hands before donning a fresh pair of gloves.

- Encourage employees to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Establish policies for face coverings and require the proper use of face coverings among all of your employees. Face coverings are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult.
- Provide your employees with information on proper use of face coverings. Important things to remember:
 - Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
 - Face coverings must cover nose and mouth.
 - Employees should wash or sanitize hands before and after using or adjusting face coverings.
 - Employees should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Face coverings must not be shared and should be washed or discarded after each shift.
- Encourage customers and guests to wear face coverings at all times, except when eating and drinking.
- Note on face shields: It is not known if face shields provide any benefit as source control to protect others from the spray of respiratory particles. CDC does not recommend use of face shield for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for face coverings. Disposable face shields should only be worn for a single use. Reusable face shields should be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Frequently remind your employees of the importance of physical distancing, both at work and off work time.
- Ensure that any vendors, contractors, temporary workers, and volunteers at the establishment are also properly trained in COVID-19 preventive measures and protocols and have necessary supplies and PPE.
- Place posters or signage at the entrance to your establishment and in high visibility areas that encourages patrons to:
 - Not enter the facility if they are feeling ill.
 - Practice social distancing.
 - Utilize cough and sneeze etiquette, and hand hygiene.
 - Wear face coverings.
- Determine how you will relay information about your operations to employees, patrons, and business partners. Develop messaging via website and social media explaining your COVID-19 safety measures and policies.
- Keep your employees, patrons, and business partners informed about the latest public health recommendations and your response.

Ensuring a Safe Facility

- Use EPA-registered sanitation and disinfectant products. A list of recommended EPA registered disinfectants to use can be found here:
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Complete thorough and detailed cleaning of entire facility prior to resuming operations especially after prolonged closure.
- Establishments should frequently clean and disinfect:
 - Customer waiting areas and lobbies, break rooms, lunch rooms, lunch areas and areas of ingress and egress including host stands, entry ways, stairways, stairwells, escalators, handrails, and elevation controls.
 - Frequently touched surfaces such as doors, door handles, crash bars, light switches, waiting area chairs, credit card terminals, ATM PIN pads, receipt trays, bus tubs, serving trays, tabletops, digital ordering devices, phones, and faucets.
 - Those items that might especially attract contact from children including candy and toy vending machines, decorative fish tanks, display cases, decorative fountains, etc.
 - All reusable menus. If you use paper menus, discard them after each customer use or discontinue.
- Single-use items should be discarded after use. Consider using rolled silverware and eliminating table presets.
- Do not overlook seldom-touched surfaces and back prep and storage areas.
- Verify that your ware-washing machines are operating at the required wash and rinse temperatures and with the appropriate detergents and sanitizers.
- Remember that hot water can be used in place of chemicals to sanitize equipment and utensils in manual ware-washing machines.
- In the absence of ware-washing machine use your three compartment sink and follow the four - step method to clean and sanitize utensils and ware.
- Routinely clean and sanitize coolers and insulated bags used to deliver foods.
- Routinely clean and disinfect delivery vehicle.
- Implement procedures to increase how often you clean and sanitize surfaces in the back-of-house.
- Check restrooms regularly, and clean and sanitize them based on frequency of use.
- Sanitize any handle of a "grab and go" case after each patron touches it.
- Consider making hand sanitizer (must be of at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol) or sanitizing wipes available to customers at the entrance of the facility. Consider touchless sanitizer dispensers to reduce any contamination on the dispenser.
- Dirty linens used at dining tables such as tablecloths and napkins should be removed after each customer use and transported from dining areas in sealed bags. Employees should wear gloves when handling dirty linens.
- Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example, by opening windows and doors. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk to customers or employees (risk of falling or triggering asthma symptoms).

- To minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water, take steps to ensure that all water systems and features are safe to use after a prolonged closure of the establishment.
- If temporary outdoor structures, including tents, are used in colder months to allow for additional seating:
 - Ensure that the structure meets all fire and safety requirements. All local codes, permits, or other regulations apply.
 - Ensure that the structure is weighted, anchored or secured to the ground. Do not use methods that require cutting, screwing or drilling into the street or sidewalk.
 - Temporary outdoor structures must have adequate ventilation to allow for air circulation. Air movement allows droplets and aerosols containing the COVID-19 virus to disperse rapidly to lower concentrations, and move "out" of space.
 - If using heating equipment, ensure that it meets all the necessary safety standards. Make sure to follow product's operations manual.
 - Ensure that heaters are unplugged or disconnected for overnight storage.
 - Maintain clearance between heaters and all other objects, including tent sides.
 - Have sufficient fire extinguishers available.
 - Entrances and exits of any temporary outdoor structure must be clearly marked.
 - Use of tents and other temporary structures may be deemed unsafe during severe weather events (wind and/or snow storms, etc.)
 - No cooking or any other food prep is allowed inside the temporary outdoor structure. All food preparation must be done inside the facility's kitchen that meets regulations of the Idaho Food Code.
 - Temporary outdoor structures must be operated in a manner that prevents contamination of food.
 - All COVID-19 safety guidelines and establishment's safety protocols must be followed when using temporary outdoor structures.

Ensuring Food Safety

- Follow and maintain food-safety practices as carefully as the COVID-19 safety protocols.
- Discard all out-of-date food items.
- Apply procedures that ensure:
 - Cooked foods reach the proper internal temperatures prior to service or cooling.
 - Hot foods are cooled rapidly for later use – check temperatures of foods being cooled in refrigerators or by rapid cooling techniques such as ice baths and cooling wands.
 - The time foods being stored, displayed, or delivered are held in the danger zone (between 41°F and 135°F) is minimized.
 - Proper training for food employees with new or altered duties and that they apply the training according to established procedures.
- Apply measures to prevent cross contamination:
 - Use separate equipment. Each type of food should be prepped and handled with a separate piece of equipment.

- All work surfaces, equipment and utensils should be cleaned and sanitized after each task.
- Follow proper stacking order of foods in coolers and freezers.
- Implement personal hygiene program and remind employees to wash their hands.
- Ensure “No Bare Hand” contact with ready to eat foods.
- If providing “grab-and-go” service, stock coolers to no more than minimum levels (i.e. do not overstock coolers)
- Ensure that any wrapping and packaging used for food transport is done so that contamination of food is prevented.
- Ensure the person in charge at your establishment is a Certified Food Protection Manager and that his or her certification is up to date. Provide food-handler training to refresh employees.

Maintaining Physical Distancing and Other Safety Measures

- Ensure that your employees are practicing physical distancing measures as much as possible.
- Change establishment layouts to ensure that all customer parties remain at least 6 feet apart. Limit seating capacity to allow for social distancing.
- Bar area of a food establishment must be operated in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - Space solitary patrons at bar tops to ensure proper physical distancing of at least 6-feet apart. Patrons sitting at a bar top with one or more people in the same party are not required to be spaced 6-feet apart.
 - Discontinue operating bar areas where physical distancing of patrons is not possible.
 - Consider providing table-only service for drinks.
 - Place plastic partitions between bartenders/servers and patrons where possible.
 - Cover any exposed clean silverware, dishes, glasses, pots and pans. Relocate hanging bar glasses to a covered area.
 - Regularly disinfect liquor bottles, pour stations, taps, ice scoops, etc.
 - Use disposable cups if feasible.
 - Remove all condiments from the table (e.g., ketchup bottles, salt and pepper shakers, etc.) and consider providing pre-packaged condiments or provide condiments upon request.
- Consider offering drive-through, curbside take out, or delivery options. Considerations for such operations include:
 - Avoid direct hand-off when possible.
 - Display a door or a sidewalk sign with services available, instructions for pickup, and hours of operation.
 - Reserve parking spaces near the front door for curbside pickup only.
 - Encourage employees to maintain a distance of 6 feet or greater while interacting with customers.
 - Minimize unnecessary exchanging or sharing of scanners or pens.
- Ask customers to wait in their cars or away from the establishment while waiting to pick up food or when waiting to be seated. Inform customers of food pick-up and dining protocols on the business website and on posted signs.
- Implement social distancing protocols for customers waiting in line inside or outside the facility. A minimum distance of 6 feet between customers must be maintained at all times.

- A practical method of doing this would be to place tape on the floor to act as markers for where customers should stand to ensure social distancing.
 - Staff need to monitor and guide customers accordingly.
 - Consider removing seats to better facilitate social distancing between seated customers.
 - Update floor plans for common dining areas, redesigning seating arrangements to ensure 10-feet of separation between table setups.
- Physical barriers are acceptable where practical, especially in booth seating.
- Consider a reservations-only or call-ahead-seating business model to better space diners.
- Remind third-party delivery drivers, vendors, and any suppliers that you have internal distancing requirements.
- Limit contact between wait staff and guests.
- If practical, physical barriers such as partitions or Plexiglass at registers are acceptable.
- During transactions, have the customer insert their chip card/swipe their credit card into the payment device themselves to minimize contact with items from others. If a signature is required on a credit card slip, sanitize the pen that was used by the customer.
- Use technology where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction, including mobile ordering, menu tablets, texts on arrival for seating, and contactless payment.
- If your establishment has a customer self-service salad bar, have an employee supervise the use of it/construct the salads for the patrons. Ensure that there are adequate sneeze guards in place and all of the utensils are removed properly cleaned and sanitized frequently. Allow for enough space in the salad bar area so customers may practice good social distancing while in line. Follow CDH recommendations for salad bars, buffets, and other self-service areas:
<https://www.cdhd.idaho.gov/pdfs/cd/Coronavirus/Resource%20Docs/food-childcare/Guidance-Self-Service-Areas-06-05-20.pdf>
- Discard paper menus after each customer use or discontinue paper menus entirely.
- Encourage patrons to wash hands thoroughly and frequently while in the establishment. Make hand sanitizer available.
- Determine ingress/egress to and from restrooms to establish paths that allow for physical spacing of guests and staff.
- Consider an exit from the facility separate from the entrance.
- Employers should follow local and state requirements when it comes to face coverings, which the CDC recommends as an effective tool to mitigate risk from individuals who show COVID-19 symptoms. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>
- Establish protections for employees at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
 - Offer options for employees at higher risk for severe illness (including older adults and people of all ages with certain underlying medical conditions) that limits their exposure risk.
 - Rotate and stagger shifts to limit the number of employees in the establishment at the same time.
 - Stagger and limit dining times to minimize the number of customers in the establishment.
 - When possible, use flexible work hours to help establish policies and practices for physical distancing between your employees and others.

- For employees who commute to work using public transportation or ride sharing, encourage them to use transportation options that minimize close contact with others. Ask employees to follow the CDC guidance on how to Protect Yourself When Using Transportation <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/using-transportation.html>
- Encourage customers at higher risk to utilize alternative options such as using drive through, pick-up, call-in, curbside, or delivery options.

Employee Being Tested for COVID-19 or Has Symptoms but is not Tested

- Any employee being tested for COVID-19 should not work and should be isolated at home while waiting for test results.
- If the test result is negative or testing was not done, the employee should stay home until fever has been gone for 1 day and symptoms improve.

Employee with Lab-Confirmed COVID-19

Notification: When an employee notifies you of a positive COVID-19 test and the employee is not already isolated at home, they must be sent home immediately. Advise the employee to stay in isolation. Ask the employee which coworkers they have been in close contact with starting two days before the start of symptoms. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines a *close contact* as an individual who has had contact with someone with COVID-19 within 6-feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or longer. Your local health department will contact you to obtain this information for the purpose of determining those at highest-risk. Not every employee will be contacted (only those at highest risk). Your health department will also follow-up with the person confirmed to have COVID-19 to advise of next steps.

Consider alerting your staff as soon as possible, but remember to keep it confidential as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Your message should include:

- Possible dates of exposure
- Reminder to employees that there is current community spread of COVID-19. Advise them to watch for signs and symptoms which develop within 2 – 14 days from possible exposure
- Remind employees how to best protect themselves from COVID-19 and the importance of staying home if they are sick
- Let your employees know what your establishment is doing as a result of exposure (e.g. closing, cleaning, etc.)
- Remind your employees of the establishment's illness policy
- Where to find reputable sources and information for COVID-19 (CDC, local health department, www.coronavirus.idaho.gov)

Cleaning: It is recommended to close off areas used by the ill employee and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24-hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection. The CDC offers guidance on how best to clean an area in

which an infected person was present. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

People with COVID-19 who have stayed home (home isolated) can stop home isolation under the following conditions:

Your employee will not have a test to determine if they are still contagious. They will be cleared to return to work after these three things have happened:

- They have had no fever for at least 24-hours (that is one full day of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers)

AND

- other symptoms have improved (for example, when their cough or shortness of breath have improved)

AND

- at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

Potential Exposure to Lab-Confirmed COVID-19

If you or an employee at your establishment think you or they have been exposed to someone with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19, follow the steps below to monitor your health and avoid spreading the disease to others if you get sick.

You generally need to be in close contact with a sick person to get infected. Close contact includes:

- Living in the same household as a sick person with COVID-19
- Caring for a sick person with COVID-19
- Being within 6-feet of a sick person with COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or longer
- Being in direct contact with secretions from a sick person with COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed on, kissing, sharing utensils, etc.).

- ✓ People who have been in close contact with a person who is sick from COVID-19 should stay home for 14-days since the last day of contact with the infected individual and monitor their health.
- ✓ If you have not been in close contact with a sick person with COVID-19, you should monitor your health for 14-days since the last day of contact with the infected individual. Your risk of becoming ill is lower than for someone who has close contact
- ✓ If you get sick with fever, cough or shortness of breath (even if your symptoms are very mild), contact your healthcare provider. They will evaluate your symptoms, determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19, and instruct you on care, self-observation and/or isolation.

This guidance is subject to change as more information becomes available about limiting the transmission of COVID-19. For more information on COVID-19, additional resources are available at the following links:

- CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Print Resources:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html>
- CDC Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations:

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Document Content Source: CDC, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

- CDC When and How to Wash Your Hands:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>
- National Restaurant News - National Restaurant Association releases coronavirus reopening guide for industry:
 - <https://www.nrn.com/operations/national-restaurant-association-releases-coronavirus-reopening-guide-industry>
- State of Idaho Official Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website:
 - <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/>
- Central District Health COVID-19 Resources:
 - <https://www.cdh.idaho.gov/covid>
 - <https://www.cdh.idaho.gov/dac-coronavirus-resources>
 - Central District Health Call Center: 208-321-2222, M-F 8:30 am-4:30 pm